

Patterns of Western Astrology

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

Shelby Logan

Thesis Advisor

Sarojini Johnson



Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

May 2014

Expected Date of Graduation

May 2014

SpColl
Undergrad
Thesis
LD
2489
.Z4
2014
.L64

Abstract

Modern astrology in the West is often only experienced through daily horoscopes found in magazines or on the internet. Beyond this small fragment of astrology, there is a vast history behind its practice. What has remained throughout its history are the patterns and connections found between the signs of the the zodiac. Common elements of dualities, triplicities, and quadriplicities are present in each of the twelve zodiac signs, representing the relationship not only between the signs but the elements of the universe. Through the form of a book the scope of the history of astrology in the West is paired with a visual examination of patterns made of its core elements to gain a unique perspective on an ancient practice.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank Sarojini Johnson for all her help not just this semester but in my time at Ball State. There were fewer things I enjoyed more in my time here than going to her printmaking classes and being able to create beautiful prints and books.

I also want to thank Sam Minor for being a great mentor and teacher the past three years. They've been the most stressful, but also the most fun three years and I owe much of that to him.

Author's Statement

As someone with an interest in astrology but knowing little beyond what is presented in popular culture, this book was created as a way to learn more about it through both research and visual exploration. For hundreds of years the practice of astrology in the West was a tool to predict weather, illness, misfortunes, and the like. In modern times astrology is used to gain a better understanding of one's self. To understand astrology today, it was important to me to know how it was used in the past.

In researching the history of astrology through books such as Nicholas Campion's two volumes of *A History of Western Astrology* and S.J. Tester's *A History of Western Astrology*, I discovered that the core pieces of modern astrology practice have been in use for over 2000 years. This history is represented visually by a timeline in the first section of the book. The purpose of the timeline is to organize the research into a concise, easy to follow flow of information that anyone could pick up and understand, whether they know a lot or almost nothing about astrology. The timeline is separated into people and events, with the former on the top and latter on the bottom, divided by the timeline marking the dates. Each person is connected directly to the timeline by a line in order to see where exactly they fall in the history of astrology. At the top of the timeline the events feature a colored bar behind the dates, marking their moment or span of time during the history.

The second half of the book is a visual study of astrology, specifically the connections between the twelve signs of the zodiac that are the heart of the practice. The first three pages give background on what the signs are, how they are used in reading birth charts, and how the dualities, elements, and qualities connect the signs together. This is so someone who may know nothing about astrology can begin to understand the relationships that are central to modern astrology. This background came from reading two popular and common books used by astrologers and astrology enthusiasts, *The Only Astrology Book You'll Ever Need* by Joanna Martine Woolfolk and *Astrology: a Cosmic Science* by Isabel M. Hickey.

Making patterns was the best way for me to visually represent both the connections between the signs and their uniqueness at the same time. The patterns are based on methods I learned after reading a foundational book on pattern making by Lewis Day called *Pattern Design*. To design the patterns I took the three groupings (duality, element, and quality) and gave each type a symbol and color to represent them within the pattern. Each symbol was then placed within a grid. These individual layouts are then layered according to each sign to create the unique patterns. The base layer is the duality. A sign's duality is masculine or feminine, represented by a blue square and pink circle in the pattern, respectively. The middle layer is the sign's element. The four elements (fire, earth, air, water) are presented as their classical symbol based on a triangle, which are arranged, marked, and colored in different ways to distinguish them from one another. The top layer then is the quality of the sign, either cardinal, fixed, or mutable. They are represented by shapes and colors that correspond to their meaning. Cardinal signs are active leaders, expressed as a yellow diamond. The unyielding fixed signs become flat, orange rectangle in the pattern. Mutable signs are purple ellipses, signifying their status as the adaptable signs.

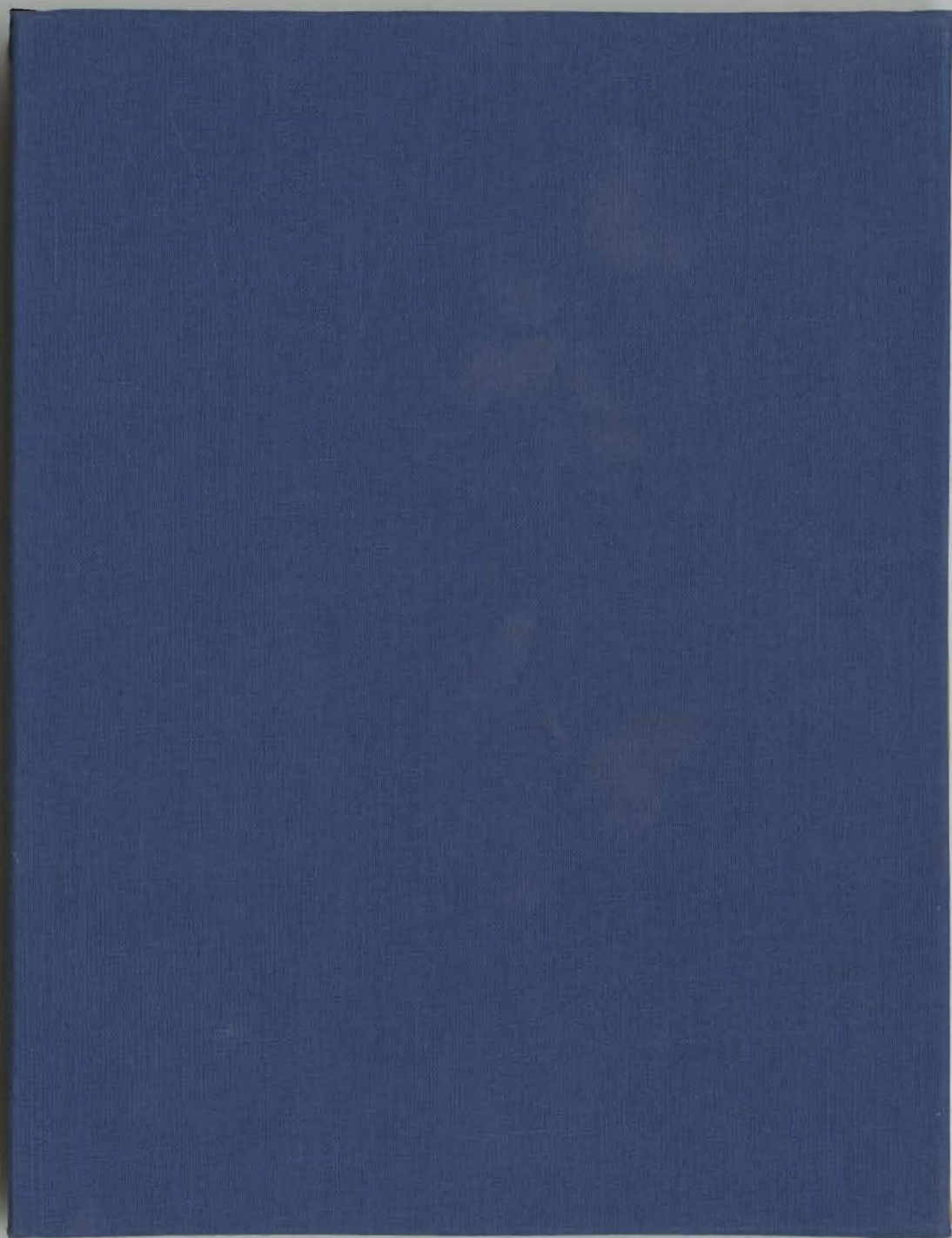
The form of the book itself is composed of two styles of book binding. The first half of the book, the timeline, is an accordion fold. This is so the reader can extend the page out to see the entire timeline at once. The pattern half of the book is unbound, leaving the pages free to be held in the reader's hands, which gives them a more intimate experience. This also creates the opportunity for the reader to play with the arrangement of the three pattern layers, allowing them to see how the patterns change when the layers are reversed, flipped, and reordered. It is all held together by a slip that is pulled on and off to open and close the book.

By exploring Western astrology through both research and visual representations, I gained a more well-rounded understanding of the practice. The process of creating this book also allowed me to further develop the bookmaking skills I had such as layout,

printing, and binding. Designing the pages was an avenue for me to use my typography and color skills to their full extent within a complete work. The final project is a reflection of my method of working, which is research and analysis followed by creative decision making.

Works Cited

- Campion, Nicholas. *History of Western Astrology*. Vol. 1 & 2. London: Continuum, 2009. Print.
- Day, Lewis F.. *Pattern design*. New York: Dover Publications, 1999. Print.
- Hickey, Isabel M.. *Astrology: a cosmic science*. Sebastopol, Calif.: CRCS Publications, 1992. Print.
- Woolfolk, Joanna Martine. *The Only Astrology Book You'll Ever Need*. New ed., Taylor Trade Pub. pbk. ed. Lanham [Md.: Taylor Trade Pub., 2008. Print.
- Tester, S. J.. *A History of Western Astrology*. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990. Print.



A Timeline of Western Astrology

The origins of astrology as it developed in the West can be traced back to cuneiforms of the Assyrian Era. From the first recordings of constellations as they followed the seasons, to the popular daily horoscopes of magazines and papers today, astrology has been both a highly-esteemed practice and a subject that people would never dare talk about. As discoveries were made and the world view changed across centuries, so did the practice of astrology in the West.

This timeline serves to outline the major events and people that shaped Western astrology from around 1000 BCE to the 21st century. The high points of classical Greece and medieval Europe are separated by astrology's near disappearance in the early Middle Ages and decline after the Enlightenment.

Assyrian Era (1300-600 BCE)

By 700 BCE the 12 modern zodiac signs are mapped, named, and given character traits. A series of cuneiforms (clay tablets), mul. APIN recorded astrology and astronomy up to this point.

300-500 CE

Prominent Christians write attacks on astrology.

417-410 BCE

Babylonian astrologers create the zodiac (12 signs, 30 degrees apart).

Early 400s CE

St. Augustine denounces astrology as Satanic.

410 BCE

The date of the oldest recorded horoscope.

139 BCE, 33 BCE, & 11 CE

Edicts expel astrologers from Rome.

700-800 CE

Classical philosophers texts are translated and attract interest in Constantinople.

600-1000 CE

The practice of astrology essentially dies out in the West as Christianity ended classical thinking in Europe.

1100-1200 CE

During this time many Arabic astrological texts are translated for use in the West.

1200-1400

Astrologers questions of p to aiding mo about war ar

1100-1400 CE

Philosophers' curiosity aids the revival of the study of classical texts, beginning to reestablish a relationship with the cosmos.

1000 BCE

Empedocles (b. 493 BCE)

Greek philosopher who establishes the four elements (fire, air, earth, water) as the root of all Earth's structures.

Plato (b. 428 BCE)

Greek philosopher who writes in one of his dialogues *Timaeus* that celestial bodies have intelligent souls and move in circles.

Aristotle (b. 384 BCE)

Greek philosopher introduces a fifth element, ether (the heavens). Continues Plato's idea of the divine heavenly bodies.

0 CE

Poseidonius (b. 135 BCE)

Greek philosopher-scientist who popularized astrology.

Ptolemy (b. 100 CE)

Egyptian astronomer whose work *Tetrabiblos* is the foundation for Western astrology.

Vettius Valens (ca. 160 CE)

Greek astrologer whose *Anthology* demonstrated astrological theory through horoscopes.

1000 CE

Michael Scot (b. 1135 CE) & Guido Boratti (b. 1210 CE)

High profile practicing astrologers in Scotland and Italy, respectively who brought astrology back to the public consciousness.

Marsilio Ficino (b. 1433 CE)

Italian humanist philosopher that revived respect for Pagan learning through his translation of much of Plato's work. However, at the end of his life he was publicly opposed to astrology.

Giovanni Pico (b. 1463 CE)

Italian philosopher and author of *Disputationes*, containing arguments against astrology that were felt for decades after.

Masha'allah (b. 740 CE)

Persian Jewish astrologer whose astrological texts become standard in medieval Europe.

Abu Ma'shar (b. 787 CE)

One of the most prominent astrologers in the Middle East. He continued Masha'allah's work and was highly influential to astrology in medieval Europe.

1148 CE

Spanish Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra publishes *The Beginning of Wisdom*, covering basic knowledge for horoscope interpretation in the West.

Nicholas C

Polish astro that the Sur universe ch physical and

Tycho Brah

Astronomer of the cosm measureme movements

Galileo Gal

His confirm of the sun as further upse

1400-1600 CE

Scientific discoveries during the Renaissance cause many prominent thinkers to reject astrology as a valid science.

1700 CE-Present

A majority of highly-educated, upper class individuals are firmly against the practice of astrology, deeming it a pseudo-science.

1200-1400 CE

Astrologers use horoscopes to answer questions of public customers, in addition to aiding monarchs in making decisions about war and in medicine.

1455-1630 CE

Gutenberg publishes the first printed book in 1455, and soon astrological almanacs are published every European country within two centuries. They remain popular through the early 20th century.

1500 CE

Nicholas Copernicus (b. 1473 CE)

Polish astronomer whose discovery that the Sun is the center of the universe changed the thinking on the physical and spiritual worlds.

Tycho Brahe (b. 1473 CE) & Johannes Kepler (b. 1546 CE)

Astronomers and scientists whose study of the cosmos gave more accurate measurements of the planets and their movements.

Galileo Galilei (b. 1564 CE)

His confirmation of Copernicus's theory of the sun as the center of the universe further upset the idea of a perfect cosmos.

William Lilly (b. 1602 CE)

The most prominent astrologer in England, Lilly's book *Christian Astrology* (1647), the first astrology book printed in English, paved the way for successful astrology practice in England for the next century.

Isaac Newton (b. 1642 CE)

Newton's laws of the universe are the final step in the removal of the soul from the cosmos, leaving those who believe in astrology to appear uneducated to those who were.

1784-1788 CE

Ebenezer Sibly's encyclopedia, *A New and Complete Illustration of the Celestial Science of Astrology*, creates among the middle class a revival of astrology.

Late 1700s - Mid 1800s CE

The Romantic movement brings a renewed interest in bringing the soul back into nature and the cosmos again as a reaction against the Enlightenment.

1988 CE

Knowledge of US President Ronald Reagan's use of astrological advice is made public, attracting contempt from most of the population.

1930 CE

The first regular astrology column is published in the *Sunday Express*, paving the way for 12 paragraph horoscope columns in magazines and papers thereafter.

2010 CE

Only a few dozen professional astrologers work in the UK and a few hundred in the US.

2014 CE —

Alan Leo (b. 1860 CE)

As "The Father of Modern Astrology", Leo develops the concept of the sun-sign and turns the focus away from predictive astrology to character analysis.

Carl Jung (b. 1875 CE)

Jung's ideas on archetypes and internal development processes were based in psychology, but modern astrology uses these aspects in current practices.

CSICOP (est. 1976 CE)

The Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal works with skeptic groups across the globe to combat pseudo-sciences, in which they include astrology.



In order to take meaning from a birth chart, it's important to understand the zodiac signs and what they represent. The sign that a planet falls in explains how the characteristics of that planet manifest in a person. When studying astrology it becomes apparent that connections are central to deciphering a chart. What follows in this section is a visual exploration of the connections between zodiac signs through pattern making. In Western astrology the 12 signs are divided into groups by sixes, fours, and threes.

First, dualities separate the signs into six masculine and six feminine signs. In this case masculine represents signs that are expressive outward through action, and feminine represents signs that are more contained and gain strength through inner reserves.

Then each sign is connected to one of the four main elements of the Earth: fire, earth, air, and water. These are also called triplicities. Fire signs are active and energetic. Earth signs are grounded and practical. Air signs are intellectual and engaged. Water signs are intuitive and emotional.

Qualities divide the signs into groups of four (quadriplicities): cardinal, fixed, and mutable. Cardinal signs are outgoing go-getters. Fixed signs are stubborn perfectors. Mutable signs are open to change and very adaptable.

These three types of division are represented visually through shape and color. The top layer of the pattern is the quality of the sign. The second is the element, and the third is the duality. The three layers come together to create a unique pattern for each sign, while also representing the connections the signs have with each other.

Aries (The Ram)

March 21 - April 19

Sign of Self

Duality – Masculine

Element – Fire

Quality – Cardinal

Planet – Mars

Opposite – Libra

Body Part – Head

Taurus (The Bull)

April 20 - May 20

Sign of Personal Possessions

Duality – Feminine

Element – Earth

Quality – Fixed

Planet – Venus

Opposite – Scorpio

Body Part – Neck & Throat

Gemini (The Twins)
May 21 - June 20

Sign of Self-Expression

Duality – Masculine

Element – Air

Quality – Mutable

Planet – Mercury

Opposite – Sagittarius

Body Part – Hands, Arms,
Shoulders
& Lungs

Cancer (The Crab)

June 21 - July 22

Sign of Home Life

Duality – Feminine

Element – Water

Quality – Cardinal

Planet – Moon

Opposite – Capricorn

Body Part – Breasts
& Stomach

Leo (The Lion)
July 23 - August 22

Sign of Personal Pleasure and Creativity

Duality – Masculine

Element – Fire

Quality – Fixed

Planet – Sun

Opposite – Aquarius

Body Part – Back, Spine,
& Heart

Virgo (The Virgin)
August 23 - September 22

Sign of Work and Self-Improvement

Duality – Feminine

Element – Earth

Quality – Mutable

Planet – Mercury

Opposite – Pisces

Body Part – Nervous System
& Intestines

Virgo (The Virgin)
August 23 - September 22

Sign of Work and Self-Improvement

Duality – Feminine

Element – Earth

Quality – Mutable

Planet – Mercury

Opposite – Pisces

Body Part – Nervous System
& Intestines

Libra (The Scales)
September 23 - October 22

Sign of Partnership

Duality – Masculine

Element – Air

Quality – Cardinal

Planet – Venus

Opposite – Aries

Body Part – Lower Back
& Kidneys

Scorpio (The Scorpion)

October 23 - November 21

Sign of Legacies and Shared Possessions

Duality – Feminine

Element – Water

Quality – Fixed

Planet – Pluto

Opposite – Taurus

Body Part – Genitals

Sagittarius (The Archer)

November 22 - December 21

Sign of Philosophy and Higher Thinking

Duality – Masculine

Element – Fire

Quality – Mutable

Planet – Jupiter

Opposite – Gemini

Body Part – Liver, Hips,
& Thighs

Capricorn (The Sea Goat)

December 22 - January 19

Sign of Public Life

Duality – Feminine

Element – Earth

Quality – Cardinal

Planet – Saturn

Opposite – Cancer

Body Part – Bones & Joints

Aquarius (The Water Bearer)

January 20 - February 18

Sign of Hopes and Ideals

Duality – Masculine

Element – Air

Quality – Fixed

Planet – Uranus

Opposite – Leo

Body Part – Circulatory
System, Shins,
& Ankles

Pisces (The Fish)
February 19 - March 20

Sign of Dreams and Self-Delusion

Duality – Feminine

Element – Water

Quality – Mutable

Planet – Neptune

Opposite – Virgo

Body Part – Feet

This book was created in May 2014 by Shelby Logan while at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana.

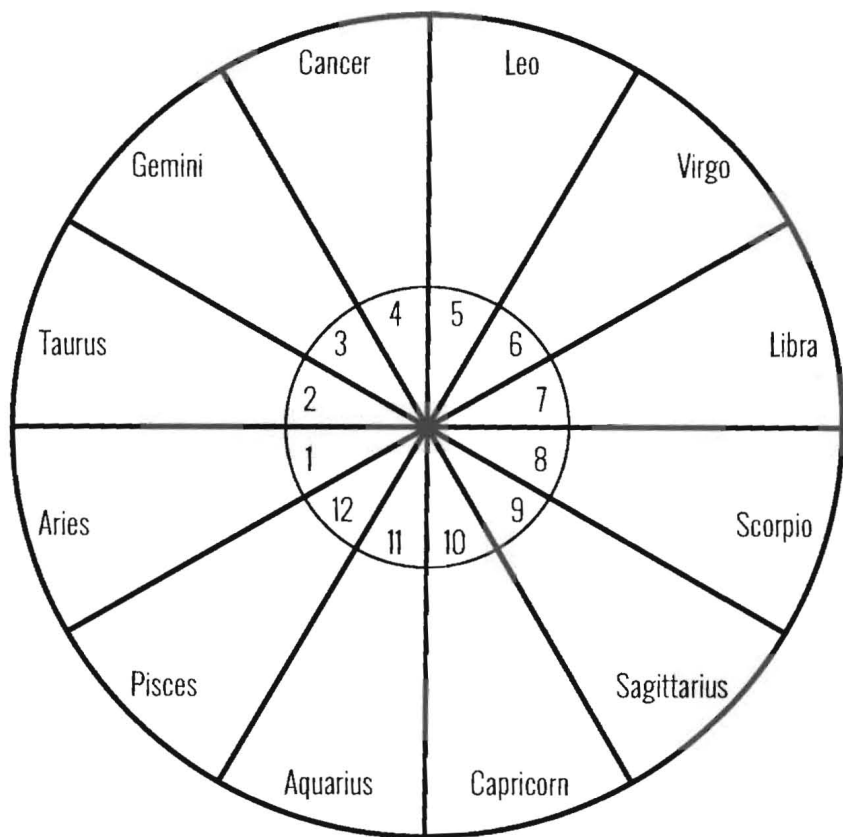
The fonts used are Oswald (Light, Book, and Bold) and Lato (Light).

Pages were printed on cardstock and Canson drawing paper.

The Signs of the Zodiac

If you were to ask someone what their sign was, most people could probably answer correctly. Daily, weekly, and monthly horoscopes have been popular in magazines and newspapers since the 1930s, and now with the internet they are even easier to find. Some may read them for a laugh, while others take to heart what their horoscope says. No matter the reaction, few people understand that the practice of Western astrology is much more than a person's star sign.

Astrology in the Western world developed from a way to predict weather, seasons, illness, and misfortunes to an avenue to further one's own understanding of self in connection with the universe. Modern astrological practice in the West involves the use of a birth chart, which is a measurement of where the planets and constellations are located themselves and in relation to each other at the exact moment and location of birth. This chart is then used like a road map to see what the stars have laid out for an individual in their lifetime. This map is a 360° circle divided into 12, 30° section that each represent a zodiac sign. These sections also contain the 12 houses. Used since the Babylonian Era, the houses represent categories of life, such as finances, marriage, career, and self. The houses are then understood by any planets that may be aligned within them at the time of birth. The characteristics of a planet affect how these houses manifest in an individual's life.



Example of positioning of the signs and numbered houses. Positioning will vary for each birth chart depending on time, date, and location.

